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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 004066

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/24/2013  
TAGS: PHUM PREL TU TIP IN TURKEY  
SUBJECT: GOT EXPRESSES DETERMINATION ON ANTI-TIP EFFORTS

REF: SECSTATE 171293

(U) Classified by DCM Robert S. Deutsch for reasons 1.5 (b)  
and (d).

¶11. (C) June 23 DCM delivered reftel talking points to Ambassador Umur Apaydin, MFA Director General for Consular Affairs. Apaydin stated GOT would review USG trafficking-in-persons (TIP) recommendations and guide its work as appropriate. Noting strong bilateral cooperation and thorough police investigations, Apaydin emphasized that recent GOT efforts to combat TIP continue to accelerate. He affirmed the GOT's Anti-Trafficking-in-Persons (TIP) Task Force's commitment to fighting TIP remained strong and expressed a desire for further cooperation amongst source and destination countries. Given the GOT's achievements, Apaydin asked for the source of contrary information on Turkey and sought clarification of the benchmarks laid out by G/TIP for the annual report. While the GOT was "disappointed" in Turkey's Tier III ranking and this might be demotivating for some of the officials in the task force, he stated Turkey's commitment to expanding its anti-TIP efforts would continue.

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A Stronger Commitment to Cooperation  
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¶12. (C) Apaydin stated he would leave 6/24 to attend the Stability Pact's meeting in Bucharest as the GOT national coordinator for TIP. After attending many of these meetings, he stated he found them to be a useful tool for learning about TIP and, more important, learning how Turkey fits as a destination country. He emphasized the GOT's dialogue with all source and transit countries, including Ukraine, was a broad exchange of ideas and underscored that the GOT was in regular contact with all relevant countries. Apaydin noted the GOT and IOM were in frequent communication regarding a wide spectrum of anti-TIP efforts, including a repatriation program. Some of the USG recommendations, most notably a public awareness campaign aimed at end-users, he added, were very useful.

¶13. (C) Apaydin pointed to an on-going investigation involving police officials possibly implicated in TIP as a success of the GOT's anti-TIP training and commitment. He promised the GOT would continue to provide information on TIP-related investigations and prosecutions. (Note: We will follow up on the investigation of possible police corruption.  
End note.)

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A Desire for Better Understanding  
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¶14. (C) Apaydin raised the issue that many TIP experts vary on which steps are the most important: some emphasize legislative steps, such as outlawing "bogus" marriages, while others stress victim programs. He noted that while the GOT has endeavored to meet all aspects of TIP, expanded cooperation would help reconcile discrepancies amongst information. Within this context, Apaydin requested the USG to cite sources on negative information in order for the GOT to be able fully to investigate and determine whether or how their programs might be misfiring. We pressed Apaydin for better collection of statistics as well as anecdotal evidence that would clarify the picture on TIP prevention, protection, and prosecution in Turkey.

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Comment  
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¶15. (C) While our approach elicited a useful discussion about the USG recommendations, the steps provided in reftel do not represent clear, objective benchmarks - benchmarks that are

necessary to provide appropriate guidance to the GOT on what steps are required for Tier II. Apaydin noted, "While the USG report allows TIP to remain at the forefront of government objectives, it is frustrating to implement many anti-TIP steps only to be told later they are not sufficient." If we cannot set and maintain clear goalposts, this process will prove counterproductive to our ability to enhance cooperation against Trafficking-in-Persons and to other interests and objectives in Turkey.

PEARSON